DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 149 054 CE 014 220

AUTHOR Bhola, H. S.
TITLE Learning Resources for Community Education: Design Notes on Delivery Systems.
INSTITUTION San Jose State Univ., Calif.
PUB DATE Nov 77
NOTE 44p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; Community Action; Community Change; Community Characteristics; *Community Development; *Community Education; *Delivery Systems; Demonstration Projects; Developing Nations; Educational Development; Educational Facilities; Educational Needs; *Educational Planning; Educational Resources; Educational Strategies; Facility Planning; Foreign Countries; *Instructional Materials Centers; Media Selection; Models; *Organization; Socioeconomic Influences; Systems Development; Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS Latin America; Peru; Venezuela

ABSTRACT

A comprehensive and adaptable system of organizational arrangements is proposed in this document that will enable educational planners in Latin American countries to develop and deliver learning resources for community education and community action programs. A three-tier system of learning resources centers for community education is described. Discussion of the first tier, community level learning resources centers (CLRCs), includes learning resources for a learning society, profitable investment and distributive justice, community education in small communities (2,500 or less), and district learning resources centers (DLRCs) as a backup system to CLRCs. Discussion of the second tier, DLRCs, to serve communities with a population of 2,500 to 5,000, includes scenarios of community education in Venezuela and a community center in Peru. Discussion of the third tier, a national multimedia megacenter, includes institutional arrangements for such a center; policies on procurement of instructional materials; special projects such as cultural missions; and designing objectives in context for each cultural and sociopolitical reality. (TA)

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LEARNING RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION: DESIGN NOTES ON DELIVERY SYSTEMS

By

H.S. Bhola
Professor of Education
Indiana University

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November 1977

These design notes were developed as part of the author's consultancy to the USAID/San Jose State University project, "Learning Resources Center-Based Community Education Systems (LRCBCES)," Project No. 598-15-670-573.

CE 014 220

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I
INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive and adaptable system of organizational arrangements is proposed that will enable educational planners in Latin American countries to develop and deliver learning resources for use in programs of community education for community action. A three-tier system of learning resources centers is proposed: a multimedia mega center at the highest level, followed by district level learning resources centers (DLRC's) and community level learning resources centers (CLRC's) in communities of size and need that could support such centers. It is suggested that in small communities of 2,500 or less, it may not be advisable to establish independent learning resource centers. Community education services should be provided to such communities on an urgent basis by establishing community groups of various kinds in such communities.

These design notes were developed as part of the author's consultancy to the USAID/San Jose State University project, "Learning Resources Center-Based Community Education Systems (LRCBCES)," and submitted to the project director in the form of three memoranda, now appearing as parts II, III and IV of this paper.

II

LEARNING RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION: THE FIRST RUNG

Elsewhere, we have discussed the nature of community education for community action including normative criteria for judging both means and ends of community education.[1] We have also presented, in another paper, a conceptualization of the use of learning resources in community education for community action.[2] The second paper sought to underline the challenge in coordinating organizational actions and instructional actions that actualize national visions on the one hand and fulfil local needs on the other.

In this paper, we engage in "progressive conceptual focussing" to conceptualize, in greater detail, the use of learning resources, and the organization of their delivery, for community education at the first rung of what will, ultimately, emerge as a multilevel national system of learning resources for a whole "learning society."

We must caution the reader by saying that this is not presented as a firm plan for every country on the use of learning resources in community education for community action at the community level. This is still nothing more than a planning model that suggests some institutional solutions which have to be evaluated and adapted to the realities of the region or the country where this model is put to work.[3]

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[1]H.S. Bhola, "Community Education for Community Action: A Multiframework Mega Model," a paper prepared for the USAID/San Jose State University project Learning Resources Center-Based Community Education Systems (Project No. 598-15-670-573), 1977.

[2]H.S. Bhola, "Conceptualizing the Use of Learning Resources in Community Education for Community Action: An Integrative General Model," another paper prepared for the project described above, 1977.

[3]An institutional solution may involve the invention of new organizational mechanisms or a restructuring of existing organizations. Second, it may involve the invention of new instructional or organizational roles to carry out the new institutional purposes.

Learning resources for a learning society

The vision of a learning society presented almost a decade ago by Hutchins, an American educator, seems like a practical ideal today.[1] Some communities of North America and Western Europe have already become learning societies and have created the learning resources needed for those learning societies. Societies of the Third World are now creating small parts and elements that would, in the future, come together as learning resource systems for a learning society. The present emphasis on nonformal education and community education is one ray of hope. The new communication media resources in various forms and with various institutional sponsorships are parts of the network which is slowly but steadily emerging. Literacy is spreading as is the transistor radio the two viruses for a learning society.

Here, then, is the first bit of planning advice. Whatever little is done by community educators, by way of production, organization and utilization of learning resources for community education in their communities and regions, must be considered a link in the ultimate network of learning resources for a learning society. This would put all such work in a larger national perspective. The realization that every little effort would have a cumulative effect would provide community workers with a needed sense of optimism.

Profitable investment and distributive justice

There should be another dividend from bringing this larger perspective to bear on community education work in communities and regions. Community educators should become aware of their invisible clients, not living in

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[1]Robert M. Hutchins, The Learning Society, New York, N.Y.: Praeger, 1968.

their particular community, but yet part of their society. This should lead to an understanding of the need to make their investment in learning resources as profitable as possible. In other words, materials produced for one community, within one program, should be made available to every person and community that wants them and can use them profitably. Understandably, some of the learning resources produced within a local program will be useful only to that local community but other materials would, most likely, be of interest to others. Such materials must be accessible to others for the total society to profit as much as possible from their investment in learning resources. This would mean not only good economics but also serve the interest of justice in the distribution of information and education.

Such general use of some of the material produced in the specific context of local programs or special projects would demand that institutional arrangements be made whereby such multiple use of materials is in fact made possible. This would, at least, mean the establishment of some kind of learning resource centers which, among other functions, will assume the function of serving as repositories of such materials and will then be able to catalog and distribute such materials to those who want them.

Who is at the first rung?

In this paper, we seek to discuss the use of learning resources (and their organization) for community education at the first rung of a multilevel system of learning resources. But who is at the first rung? What kinds of communities and families do we have in view? We have in mind small communities. But how small has a community to be, to be a small community? This is indeed a difficult question. Our answer is that perhaps a community of less than 2,500 men, women and children could be considered a small community. It would be a community that for reasons of small size and/or

problems of resources can not afford a community learning resources center of its own.

Those communities that support populations between 2,500 and 5,000, we will categorize as communities at the second rung and we would suggest models of learning resources for such communities in Part III below. We will call such learning resource centers at the second rung Community Learning Resource Centers (CLRC's).

As Figure 1(page 6) would indicate, we have made provision for learning resource centers at the district level. We have called them District Learning Resources Centers (DLRC's). These will be discussed as part of this section.

The Special Projects are a class apart and, again, will not be discussed here. Finally, the national network of learning resources for a learning society will be discussed elsewhere as also the problems of urban community education.

Community education in small communities

In addition to the normative assumptions about means and ends of community education for community action made in the two papers cited earlier, the following have entered our considerations as we suggest this model of community education at the first rung of the system:

1. Community education systems should be built from the bottom up. Beginnings with community education should be made with the most remote, underprivileged and isolated communities. One should avoid the temptation to start working where it is the easiest to act.
2. The community group should be the primary setting for instruction, discussion, action, and evaluation. This would mean the establishment of discussion forums based on radio listening and other learning resources.
3. Communities should take most of the responsibility in defining objectives,

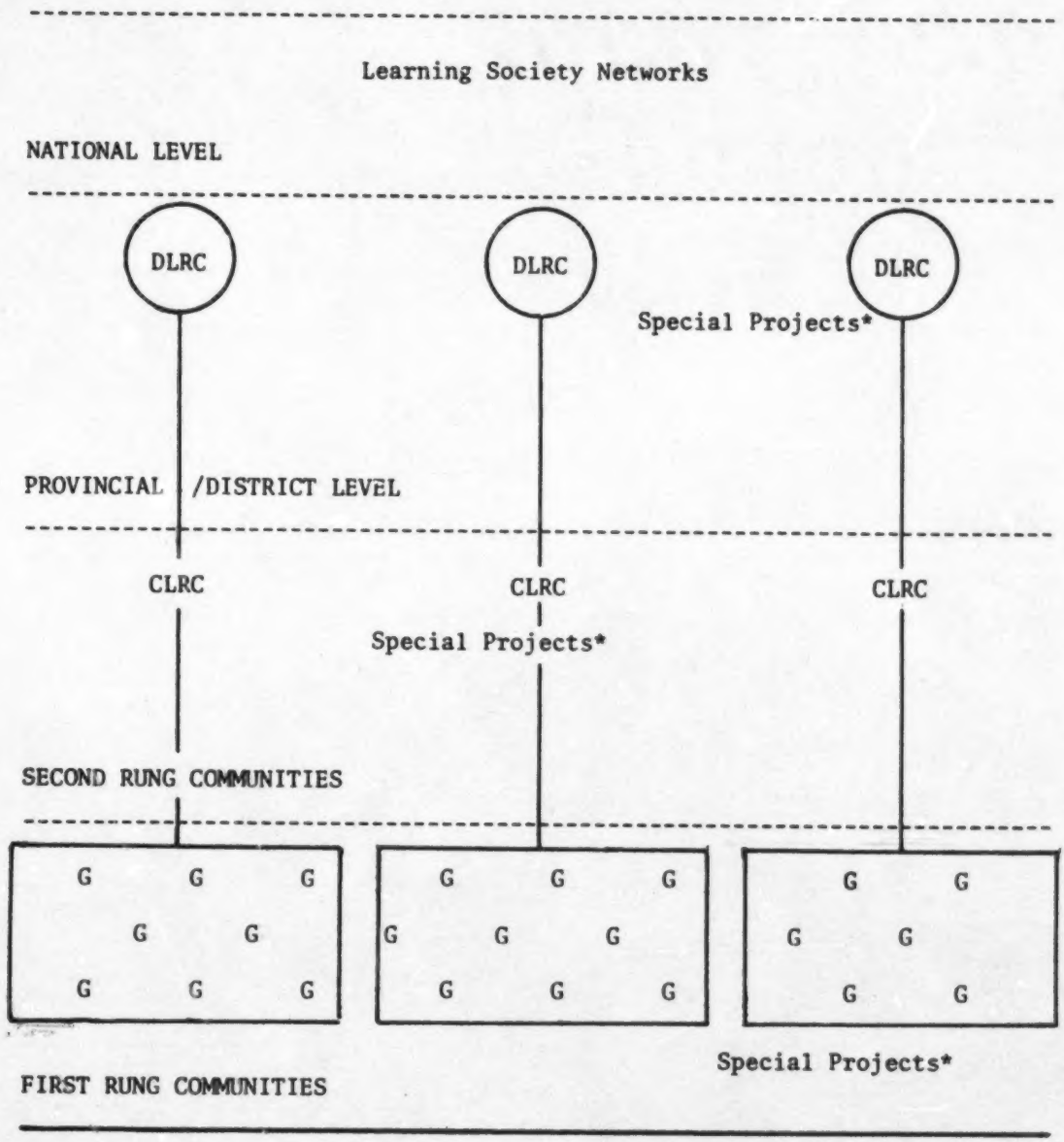


Figure-1. A plan for the utilization of learning resources for community education for community action showing DLRC supporting community education groups (G's) within first rung communities.

organizing instruction, promoting motivation and action, and evaluating results. (This should not mean benign neglect of communities by community educators at the district and national levels. Indeed, this would require important inputs from these levels and subtle and significant contributions to cultural dynamism.) As part of the scheme for local initiative and local responsibility, "Self-Help Brigades" or group such as "Men/Women/Youth for Better Tomorrow" should be created.

4. While one or even more "community centers" may be constructed by local people, using local construction materials, and by contributing labor, an LRC need not be created in every community. Indeed, it would be unrealistic to create LRC's in such small communities. After all, learning can take place with learning materials but without a learning resources center.

5. We must use what already exists: existing social organization, existing instructional/socialization roles, communication patterns and traditional media.

6. In terms of newer media and materials, we suggest three: radio, picture sets, and prepackaged instructional kits. Films may be shown occassionally if the realities of the situation permit. Radio would be in the community, perhaps, already. If it is not there in a community, it is easy to introduce. Radio requires no infrastructure of roads and railways and is the medium of community education par excellence. Production costs are low. And delivery costs have been sometimes as low as 2¢ per person per hour. Mounted pictures or photographs in size of 18" x 14" are another useful medium of instruction. Pictures dispense the need to have projectors, electricity or batteries. When mounted on strong hardboard, they can last quite long. Instructional kits that include pictures, models, specimens and other instructional material are another obvious choice.

7. It should be understood that even if there is one literate in a whole community, his presence makes it possible for the community to use written materials. If any literate person lives in the community, then written materials should become part of the instructional strategy.

District learning resources centers: the backup system

If such a program of community education is envisioned at the level of first rung communities, the following needs become, immediately, clear:

1. Need for animation at the community level which means cultural action on the part of suitably trained and sympathetic outsiders. In other words, we need a community organizer role.
2. Need for radio broadcasts to be used in radio discussion forums; picture sets on the themes of agriculture, health, nutrition, family planning, etc., kits of various kinds; folders, leaflets, and perhaps tin trunk libraries for circulation in the communities; and
3. Need for training of local cadres.

Thus, we need a DLRC with the three objectives of:

Production and procurement,

Training, and

Field organization.

We are not suggesting that new DLRC must be established in each case to begin initiatives in community education. Reference is made here to our discussion of institutional integrations in the mega model which suggests how existing institutions might be restructured to fulfil the functions proposed for a DLRC:[1]

Radio broadcasts. Radio broadcasts should be the most important production activity of a DLRC. The radio transmission facilities may be

[1]Bhola, Mega model, op. cit., section E.

owned by the DLRC or may be available to the DLRC for part of the day in consideration for money paid.

Tapes of select programs should be prepared for repeated use; for availability to users outside the area of broadcasting, and even in other Spanish speaking countries; and for use within the communities when cheap tape-recorders become available within the foreseeable time.

The DLRC should also prepare folders, leaflets, and booklets to be read by literates living within these communities or to be used by literate animators with their illiterate brethren.

Picture sets. To communicate information that requires pictorial presentation, the DLRC's should produce picture sets of photographs and graphics that go with radio broadcasts or can be used independently within discussion forums to learn and to make decisions on various aspects of agriculture, health and nutrition.

Learning kits. Some learning may require more than pictures and graphics. Actual specimens and other realia may be necessary. For this reason DLRC should also be preparing some learning kits for use in the first rung communities. These kits should be assembled in boxes made of hard plastic so that they could be transported over large distances without damage.

Tin trunk book libraries. The DLRC should also function as the headquarters for a network of mobile tin trunk libraries of books. These libraries may be nothing more than 30-50 books in a tin trunk that may be left in a community wanting it for 2 to 3 months. New books may be brought to the library when possible, while some old ones may be removed. The tin trunk library may itself, move from community to community depending upon need and requirements.

Training materials. The DLRC should also prepare training materials

to be used by its community organizers in the training of cadres in the field. These training materials could be in the form of tapes, slides and exercises that trainees can work with to learn and to evaluate their performance.

A working sketch for a DLRC is included on the next page. The organization of learning resources centers for the second rung communities will be discussed in a subsequent section.

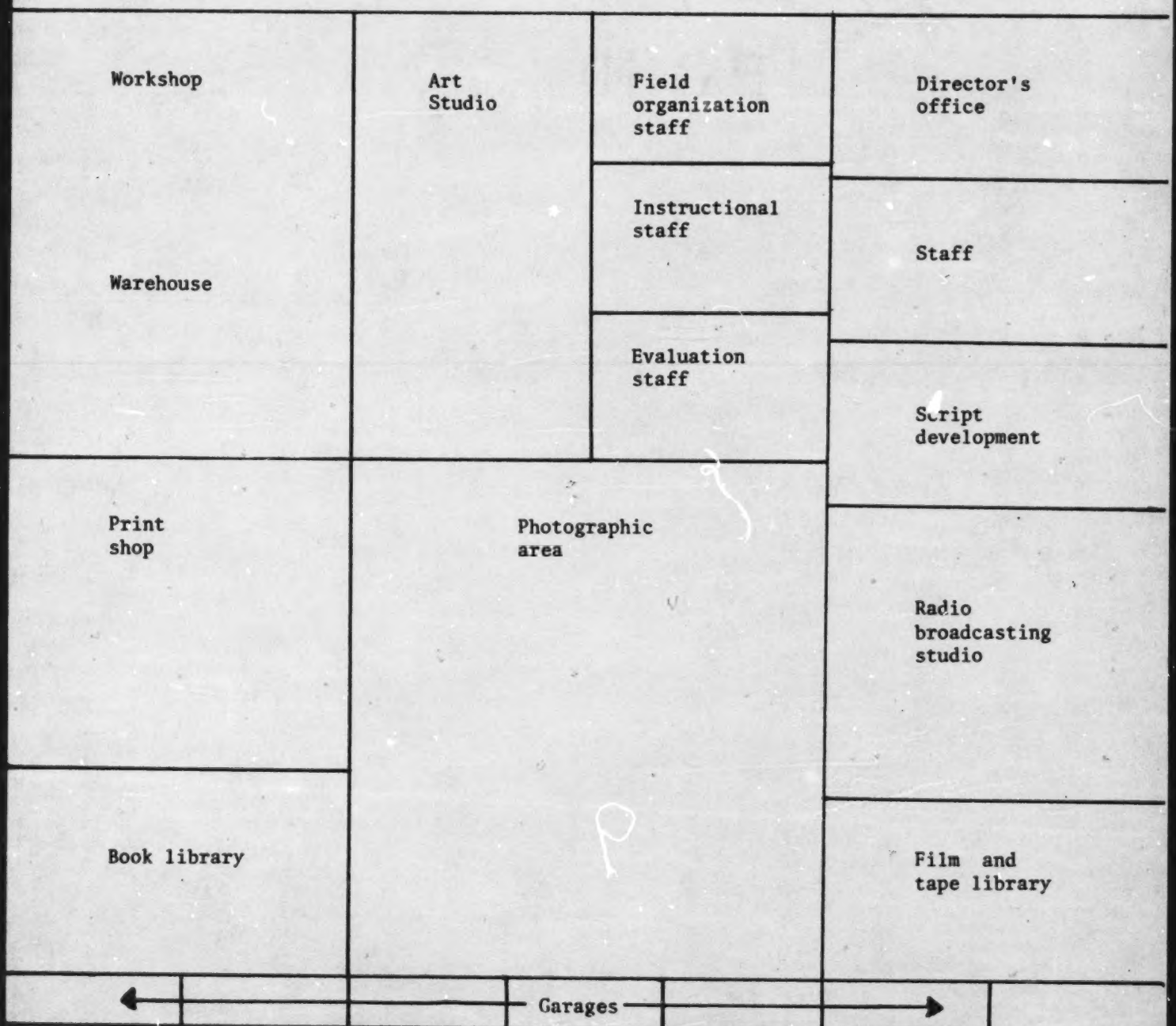


Figure-2. A working sketch for a DLRC to support community education in the first rung communities.

III

LEARNING RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION: THE SECOND RUNG

In the preceding, we have discussed a possible method for the delivery of community education to small communities of less than 2,500 men, women and children that for reasons of size or scarcity of resources were unable to have a Learning Resources Center (LRC) of their own. We pointed out that the best thing to do initially in such communities would be to establish small discussion and action groups to be serviced from District Learning Resources Centers (DLRC's). The DLRC's were assigned three main tasks of (a) production and procurement of learning resources, (b) training of personnel and local cadres, and (c) field organization. A brief description of a DLRC was also included in the preceding section. In this section, we will attend to the needs of the communities at the second rung as they prepare to participate in community education for community action.

Communities at the second rung

At the second rung of the system, we place those communities that are between 2,500 and 5,000 people, with homes and farms so organized that a Community Learning Resources Center (CLRC), when built, would be accessible to almost every one who wishes to use it.

Some of these second rung communities may be much larger than 5,000 people. In such a case, more than one CLRC could be built in the same way that some communities must be served by more than one elementary school.

Community learning resources center (CLRC)

The first basic principle that could be stated in the planning and organization of the CLRC would be that a CLRC should be community-centered but not community-bound. It should be community-centered in that it should

be planned, constructed and programmed to serve the needs of the particular community where it is located. However, it should not be community-bound in the sense that it begins to see itself as self-contained in relation to the total network of learning resources and isolated from the total learning society.

Such CLRC's should borrow materials from the national network of learning resources (to be described later), and should depend heavily upon the production, and training services of the DLRC's. The relationships among these centers at three different levels should be mutual and reciprocal. Materials developed within the special context of the CLRC's should be made available to the DIRC's and even to the institutions that constitute the national network of learning resources and materials. On the other hand, some CLRC's may have an outreach program that serves the first rung communities that we have discussed before. Thus instead of all first rung communities being served out of a DLRC, some of those may be served out of CLRC's.

Some CLRC scanarios

Once, again, we must raise some caution. As planners conceptualizing the use of learning resources in community education for community action, what we can suggest here are some criteria to be kept in mind while planning CLRC's for the second rung communities; and a couple of different designs resulting from the application of those criteria in hypothetical situations. We offer no prescriptions that would be good for all communities in Latin America, for all times! Local policy makers and their aids operating within their own socio-political, economic and institutional realities will have to design their own situation-specific solutions once they have learnt these general conceptual skills. It is possible to conceive that some solutions invented by local policy making groups do not even include the establishment

of a CLRC. Different kinds of teaching/learning philosophies would lead to choices of different media of instruction or self-instruction. That may mean different kinds of center facilities and differential use of space available in a CLRC. The organizational and instructional roles and cadres developed for the community education program must also differ significantly from region to region.

We suggest the following criteria in the organization of CLRC's:

1. Community organization and community education should begin first. A CLRC should not be mechanistically nailed on the community from outside, but instead the need for such a CLRC should grow from within the community. In other words, the community should decide if they really do need a CLRC. The center should not be allowed to stand in the way of community education.
2. If the need for a CLRC is felt, or has been understood, it should be planned in collaboration with the community. The choice of location, the facilities it should have, the relative contributions of government and local peoples to the construction and maintenance of the center should all be discussed fully and carefully within the community.
3. The plans for a building, if a building is planned, should be shown to a suitable architect. The choice of the architect itself is crucial. The building should be ecologically congruent with the environment. Local materials must be used in the construction of the CLRC, also, as far as possible, local labor.
4. The choice of learning methodologies and of media should be congruent with the existing cultural realities. Yet it would be absurd to go out of the way to be conservative and not use the newer media that are available. This would mean that traditional media would form the core of teaching-learning at such CLRC's. Among the new technologies would be radio, tape recordings, polaroid cameras; in some cases, hand-held TV cameras with facilities for

video-tape viewing; rural newspapers, library of books, specimens and realia arranged as a museum, perhaps.

5. The CLRC should not be allowed to become elitist in terms of its programs and in terms of the media technologies it uses. Yet, it would be tragic to be contemptuous of the people it seeks to serve. Such a CLRC should be conceived of as a "common man's university" and should ultimately fulfil all the instructional needs of such communities.

Two different scenarios for such CLRCs in Latin American countries follow.

SCENARIO, I

Community Education in San Simón De Cocuy, Venezuela

The following scenario for a possible CLRC was developed by Ms. Bette Booth as a project for the graduate seminar, Education and Change in Societies (H560), taught by Professor H.S. Bhola in the School of Education, Indiana University, in the Spring of 1977. To enable students to put their ideas on development, modernization, institution building and education to work, a design exercise had been included as part of the course requirement. This design exercise required that the student study the political, socio-economic and existing educational and communication infrastructures in a country of his or her choice and then propose a community education system, for the rural masses in that country, leaning heavily on the use of learning resources. A paper by the present writer, entitled, "Community Education for Community Action: A Multiframework Mega Model," was made available to the group as a background document.

The community, Bette Booth is designing for, lies in the Venezuelan Amazonas and resulted from the colonization effort of the Venezualan government through a special developmental agency, the CODESUR.

San Simón De Cocuy is one of a cluster of three or four communities, in the midst of the Amazon jungles, far away from everywhere else. While it is isolated, it is not inaccessible. An all-weather runway and a road connect it to the outside world and the capital city which has the resources generated from the nation's oil wells and has the will to colonize the area. Thus, it is an interesting case of community education participating in the very birth of a community rather than serving the educational needs of a community with a history and tradition. It is community education for social construction rather than for reconstruction.

The ethnic and class mix of the community which is fast emerging is complex: members of the Indian tribes still roaming in the Amazonas (the Maquiritare, the Waica, the Yanomano); some from the Indians of the river culture who as farmers, hunters and traders are familiar with the ways of the Latin people, and the Latins themselves who have come as military officers, elite development officials and entrepreneurs. The CODESUR has done a lot of social and scientific research to do the best job of colonization possible. They have plans for agriculture, health, small and large scale industry, collective decision making at the community level and of saving the traditional forms of culture including the folk art forms of the jungle cultures.

The curricular aspirations of such a community have been seen, by Booth, to include literacy teaching in Spanish, history and folklore, agriculture, nutrition and childcare, construction and crafts, leadership training and conscientization. Understandably, the group is seen as an important setting for community education. Therefore, the establishment of radio forums has been emphatically recommended.

To actualize the above curricular aspirations, the following staff has been proposed for the CLRC:

-- agricultural extension agent

-- home extension agent

-- health educator

-- information officer with assistants to include media production staff, radio production staff, and library and media coordinator

It is recommended that the training of this staff should be given special attention. They should learn to be social catalysts without coming to be in charge of the community they are really meant to serve.

A rough sketch of facilities to be built in such a CLRC is proposed on the next page. Notice the inclusion of the Latin patio in the architectural

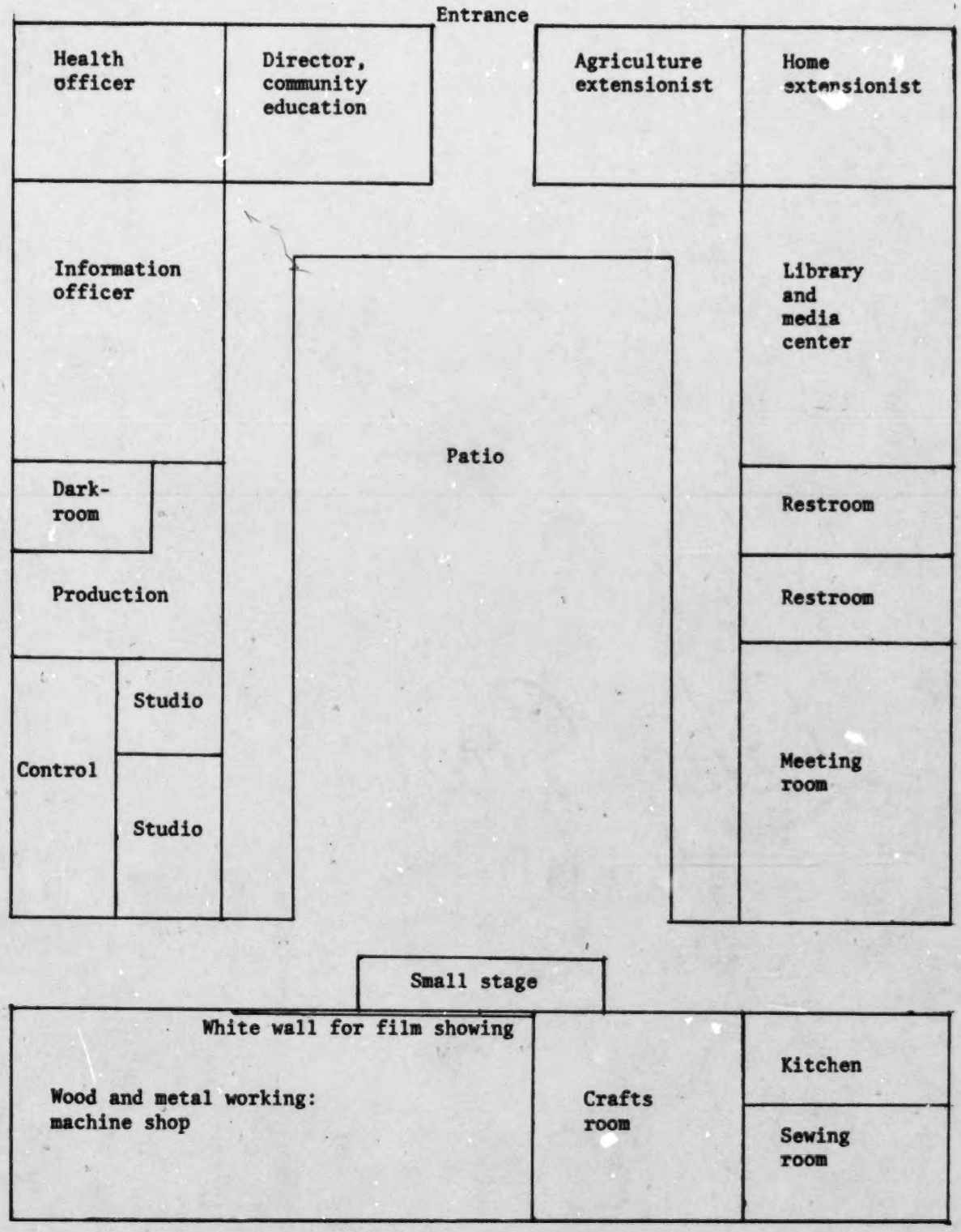


Figure 3. A proposed design for a CLRC for a community in Venezuela.

design of the CLRC and the uses to which it could be put in the tropical climate of Venezuelan Amazonas. Notice also, the separtion of the workshops and kitchen from the main building.

Booth emphasises "small media" as defined by Wilbur Schramm. Radio once again plays the central role. Money is not a problem here, and there is no radio station nearby to hook into. So, a radio station is planned for the CLRC itself. Books are given a place of pride. Other equipment proposed for the center is:

Films and film projectors

Slides and slide projectors

Tapes and tape recorders

Slide tape presentations

Records and record players

Electric typewriters

Duplicators

Cameras, especially polaroid cameras.

SCENARIO, II

A Community Center in Peru

This is the second scenario that resulted from H560, Education and Change in Societies, a seminar taught in the School of Education, Indiana University, by Professor H.S. Bhola, in the Spring of 1977. The scenario was developed by Ms. Barbara Amen. It should be noted that Ms. Amen had not had any first-hand experience of the cultural, political and socio-economic realities of Latin America. The scenario was developed on the basis of Peruvian realities as written up in books and other documents.

Amen designs for communities in Peruvian Sierra dotted by small, free holding communities of the Quechua-speaking Indians and ill-organized haciendas of the Mestizos where the Indian works. She notes that most of these communities live by farming and herding sheep and llama; and some send men out to work seasonally in industrial and mining centers. She notes also that the Sierra Indians do have a form of community government based on tradition which elects local leaders and already provides channels for community action. She notes also that traditional cultural norms of the Indian teach restrain, disapprove of display of emotion and forceful behavior, and even self-expression as we understand it. There is a lack of emphasis on personal uniqueness and focus on the needs of the social group. Appropriately, Amen makes the suggestion that we take these positives and negatives in view as we plan community education for community action for these communities in the Peruvian Sierra.

Rightly so, Amen's interest is in learning needs first, and in learning resources second. She calls her center a "community center" rather than a "learning resources center." In operational terms, however, the distinction is lost because the community center as proposed by her, does become a place

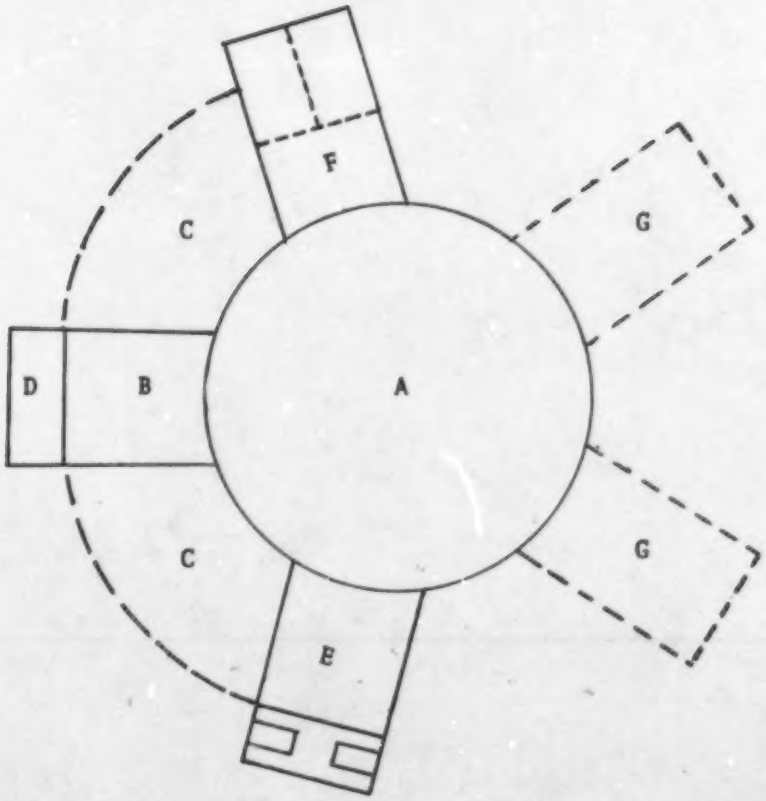
where learning resources are stored and utilized.

Amen focuses on four program elements: (1) nutrition, (2) agriculture, (3) literacy and (4) folk arts and crafts. She suggests two clear phases in the program, one building upon the other:

First phase	Second phase
Nutrition, emphasis on protein intake, especially of pregnant mothers	Becomes a more comprehensive program, includes training of local cadres of health workers
Agriculture, also vegetable gardening	Perhaps the introduction of new crops, leads to purchase of tools and some agricultural machinery, also agro-industry such as dairy farming and tanning of skins, canning, and wool processing
Training in speaking Spanish	More advanced training in literacy and numeracy in the Spanish language
Folk arts and crafts for extra income	Perhaps a cooperative for both production and marketing of handicrafts
	Drug education programs, programs to stop drift to the city of Lima

Using the existing community organization, Amen suggests the creation of an arrangement called "community work time" which obligates each individual in the community to put in some time every week in the development of a community project. (The construction of a community center could be one such project.)

A design for such a community center is suggested on the next page. The learning resources proposed for such a center are:



A - Community meeting room including a small library and projection equipment

B - Agricultural center

C - Experimental vegetable and flower garden

D - Tool storage room

E - Medical clinic with a two-bed room for serious cases

F - School, movable dividers make different divisions possible

G - Other wings that may be added later

Figure 4. A community learning resources building and its component parts.

Agricultural machinery and tools

radio sets

demonstration materials and specimens

picture sets and learning materials kits.

Once again, the usefulness of the "group" is emphasised. Also, a back up system is assumed at the regional (district) and national levels. A regional center of some sort (DLRC) is expected to help by providing material inputs which only the government can provide. More importantly, the regional center is expected to provide help in training local cadres, marketing of goods and services produced in the community, and expert consultancies on all the various aspects of agriculture, animal husbandry, health, and management of agro-businesses. This same regional center, or one at the national level, is supposed to circulate instructional materials such as films and demonstration kits.

IV

LEARNING RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION: A MULTIMEDIA MEGA CENTER

For some readers, the second title of this section will have a familiar ring. In an earlier paper, I have proposed a multiframework mega model of community education for community action.[1] I now propose a multimedia mega center of learning resources as part of an overall instructional strategy for community education for community action. Any sensible institutional planning for a national system of community education will require that national resources be harnessed to provide instructional media support to the various community education programs in a developing country. This paper is an initial effort towards such institutional planning in the Third World countries that are, typically, economies of scarcities; and have, mostly, inadequate infrastructures of communication.

The dilemma exists but is possible to resolve

Earlier, we have been emphasising the need for local initiatives in community education. We suggested that community education programs should respond to local needs, be locally designed, and use folk media and existent patterns of communication and socialization. Now, on the other hand, we are talking of institutional planning at the national level for creating what we have called a multimedia mega center. Isn't that a contradiction? How can we produce instructional and communication messages in a centrally-located multimedia mega center to be meaningful to all those communities that we assert have their very own special communication needs? Isn't there

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[1] H.S. Bhola, "Community Education for Community Action: A Multiframework Mega Model," a paper prepared for the USAID/San Jose State University project, Learning Resources Center-Based Community Education Systems (Project No. 598-15-670-573), 1977.

indeed a dilemma in the whole idea of centralized planning to generate local initiative? The dilemma, fortunately, may be more apparent than real.

Centralized planning, indeed, seems necessary to give any society a central purpose. This need not mean, of course, the enforcement of one dogmatic future. There is no reason why a society could not decide to have an open-ended future. But such an open-ended future may yet have to be planned. Centralized planning must indeed be undertaken to generate a movement within which local initiatives for community education for community action can take place. Also, as I have indicated in my mega model paper, the national purpose will have to be reinvented in each local community. This would mean that an open-ended developmental process would have to be generated in each community instead of imposing pre-designed development projects on powerless local communities. The institutional arrangements that are created at the national level to make progress towards these new directions, will have to take the form of enabling organizations, that enable local communities to invent their own means to developmental ends locally-invented. These central insitutions must, in addition, supply the inputs that cannot be locally generated by individual communities for actualizing their developmental needs and aspirations.

However, this still may not answer the concern of some in regard to the production of general messages in a multimedia mega center in a central location that would yet serve the purposes of communicating meanings to local communities engaged in the satisfaction of specific, locally-determined needs. At first sight, this may even seem impossible to reconcile, but there are possibilities:

First, there are some messages that can be centrally produced because they are of general usefulness and might, therefore, be universally consumed within a society. Documentary films that interpret the national heritage to

the nation would be an obvious example of such general messages. The contributions of various social, ethnic and regional groups to the cultural, social or economic aspects of a society must be shared and brought to the attention of all the people by film and television. Again, the messages seeking to build a national identity; to create ethnic and racial harmony; to teach economic, social and scientific literacy; and to develop a skilled community can all be centrally produced.

Second, general messages can be so produced that those may lead to discussions of problems in specific local settings and to the invention of solutions unique to a community, or area. Our knowledge of instructional development processes and of message design can enable us to produce such messages.

Third, central facilities of a national multimedia mega center may be made available to groups to produce less than general messages and message systems -- messages that serve special client groups. Mass media technologies today have made it possible to specialize message making -- to produce special messages, for special publics, at small costs. In other words, centralized facilities may be used to produce community-specific messages on video tapes and film.

Fourth, a division of labor may be developed among the multimedia mega center and local and district community centers in regard to the production of materials. Multimedia instructional packages may be planned. Parts of these multimedia instructional packages may be produced at the mega center while other parts may be produced locally within the community and/or at the district learning resources center that serves such a community.

Institutional arrangements for a multimedia mega center

The institutional arrangements needed for developing an overall strategy for learning resources for community education will consist of two organizational mechanisms:

1. A fund for the learning society; and
2. A multimedia mega center.

The fund for the learning society will be a device for raising and holding funds for the establishment and promotion of all learning resource institutions in a country, for establishing general production and distribution policies and for the review of such policies on a continuous basis.

The multimedia mega center will start as a conglomerate including many different instructional media elements: (1) a non-projected materials unit that produces charts, posters, graphics, specimens, models and kits; (2) radio transmission with production facilities; (3) a documentary film production unit; (4) television production studios and transmission facilities; (5) a film unit for producing instructional films; (6) a textbook research unit for producing school books as well as books for the new literate adults coming out of literacy classes; (7) a printing press with facilities to produce books, and multicolored charts, posters and other didactic materials; (8) a lending library for loan of books, films and tape recordings for the communities all over the country; and (9) a correspondence education bureau.

As development communication needs of the country expand and become more and more articulated and urgent; institutional experience is gained; and resources become available, different elements of this multimedia mega center may split from the mega center and become institutionalized as separate organizational entities. For instance, the radio element of the mega center may split to become a separate institution called the Public Radio Broadcasting System. A separate National Documentary Production Unit may

come about. Television services, again, may separate to develop into a National Television Network with appropriate booster stations and cable distribution systems. Sometime, in the future, a separate Center for the Production of Instructional Films may be created. Textbook production may separate to become a Textbook Research Bureau and a Center for Books for the New Reading Publics. The print shop in the mega center may leave to become a National Printing Press with facilities for production of books as well as other pictorial materials. Library services may develop into a National Library System, a National Film Library and a Library of Tapes. What remains may become an Instructional Materials Center for a district level school system.

The elements of a multimedia mega center, showing a possible pattern of separation and independent institutionalization of various elements, is shown in Figure-5 on the next page.

Policies on procurement of instructional materials

Part of the plans for the provision of instructional resources for community education for community action implied in the Fund and the Mega Center above could be most easily subverted by improper policies in regard to the procurement and purchase of instructional materials for the center. The easiest way to kill such a center, forever, would be to import free, or at great cost, a whole library of films and documentary films from U.S.A., Canada and Europe. Similarly, books, charts, posters and models could be imported and the project for the provision of community education materials be forever doomed.

While equipment will have to be imported, as also some materials and raw stocks such as film and even paper, instructional materials should be imported from outside almost never, or only in the most exceptional cases.

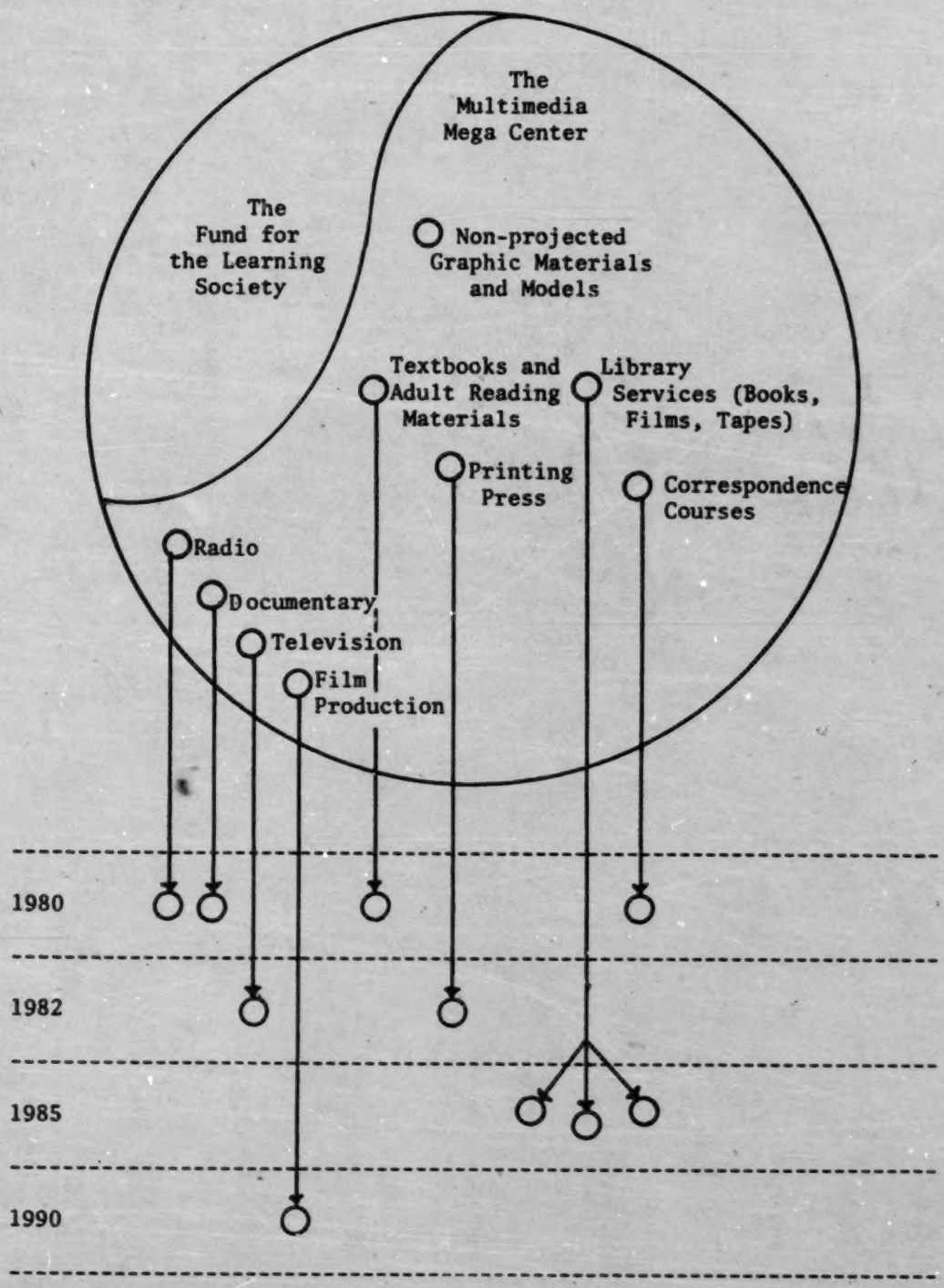

Figure-5. The elements of a multimedia mega center, showing a possible pattern of separation and independent institutionalization of various elements.

When such materials must be imported or are received as gifts from outside governments, these must always be adapted (by editing, dubbing or adding new sound tracks) before these are released to the communities within a different socio-economic and cultural situation. This would mean that practically all of the material in such a Mega Center, and distributed by it, would have been locally or regionally produced.

SPECIAL PROJECTS: A PART OF THE WHOLE

It would not be difficult to come across in any developing country, special projects that have been designed to serve immediate community education needs or the needs of learning materials for community education programs. Quite often special projects arise from the need of leadership for crisis management or to make a demonstration to the public that the government is interested in a particular problem, in a particular region, for a particular ethnic group or social class. Such special projects may sometimes be described as demonstration projects, or pilot projects or may be pretentiously described as experimental projects. These special projects may have national scope or be oriented to the region, district or a community. Most have been known to languish after the first flush of enthusiasm and fuss!

Criteria for establishing special projects

Some criteria can be established for the design and implementation of special projects:

1. Special projects should meet important and immediate needs of a community or a region.
2. Special projects must be conceived in a system perspective that responds to national vision, national resources and structural possibilities in the short and the long term. In other words, decisions should be made at the time of planning a special project as to how it would fit into the total prospective plans of the country, how the special project will expand and in what phases, and how the various institutional arrangements will be handled.
3. Special projects must play a generative role in the actualization of the

ultimate national vision in regard to community education for community action and in regard to the provision of instructional resources needed for the implementation of that national vision. Thus, the special project would be the first crystal that starts the process of social/institutional crystalization resulting ultimately in a national system of community education supported by a system of learning resources for a learning society.

Examples of special projects

Examples of special projects are easy to gather from the literature of community education for community action in Latin America and elsewhere. Some of these projects have succeeded beyond expectation and some have failed, perhaps, because they did or did not think of future plans as they implemented present action. Here are some cases:

National level	ACPO, SENA
Regional level	Cultural missions
District level	Service centers
Local level	Community education centers

Many of these special projects, actually at work in different countries, are inter-level projects such as Leadership-Followership communication through video-tapes in Canada and in Tanzania; radio broadcasting with radio forums in India, etc.

DESIGNING IN CONTEXT, BY OBJECTIVE

It would not be redundant to remind outselves that the design of multimedia mega systems and centers for a learning society and development of the community education systems that are created to serve underprivileged communities will admit of many and varied solutions. Prospective planning will have to be specific to each cultural and socio-political reality. Systems will have to be designed in context and beginning steps will have to relate to immediate objectives.

Two roads to the same destination

In regard to the creation of learning resource systems that can effectively serve the needs of community education for community action, one can use two different roads and yet reach the same destination. For example, one could focus on building a national system of learning resources; and, secondarily develop ancillary programs whereby these materials are used in different ways, and in different settings, to serve different community information needs. Such a system over the years could lead to what is represented in Figure-6. Learning resources of various kinds (films, radio, TV, books, graphics, etc.) are located within appropriate institutions at various levels (national, regional, district and community) to come together into a comprehensive system of learning resources for a learning society.

One could take another road to the same destination. One could, that is, build a national system for the delivery of community education for community action to all communities in the nation; and at each level, and within various appropriate institutions of community education, could locate

learning resource components to serve special institutional purposes at that level. Figure-7 suggests such a national network of community education from the national through regional and district to the community level with learning resource components built into the community education delivery system at all its various levels.

Finally, some countries would be able to follow neither the one nor the other of approaches discussed above in a comprehensive way so as to cover the nation and thus to serve all communities. They may, as have been suggested earlier, want to start special projects as represented in Figure-8. Such special projects may often become the foundation stone for a comprehensive learning resources system if organizational mechanisms can be created that would in the immediate run serve the purposes of all the special projects and later serve other clients in the society as shown in Figure-9.

Conclusions

Planning is a process that deals with the future; and the future, by definition, is unknown. Knowing the present helps to understand the future and, therefore, to plan for it. However, the present is not experienced by each community in the same way that by planning for one we could plan for all. It is for this reason, therefore, that planning can seldom give a particular community the prescription for its development. All a planning exercise of the present kind can contribute is to lay bare the calculus of means and ends, marshall all the variables, and help participants engage self-consciously in a process of progressive focussing of general ideas to their specific conditions -- to invent solutions uniquely their own.

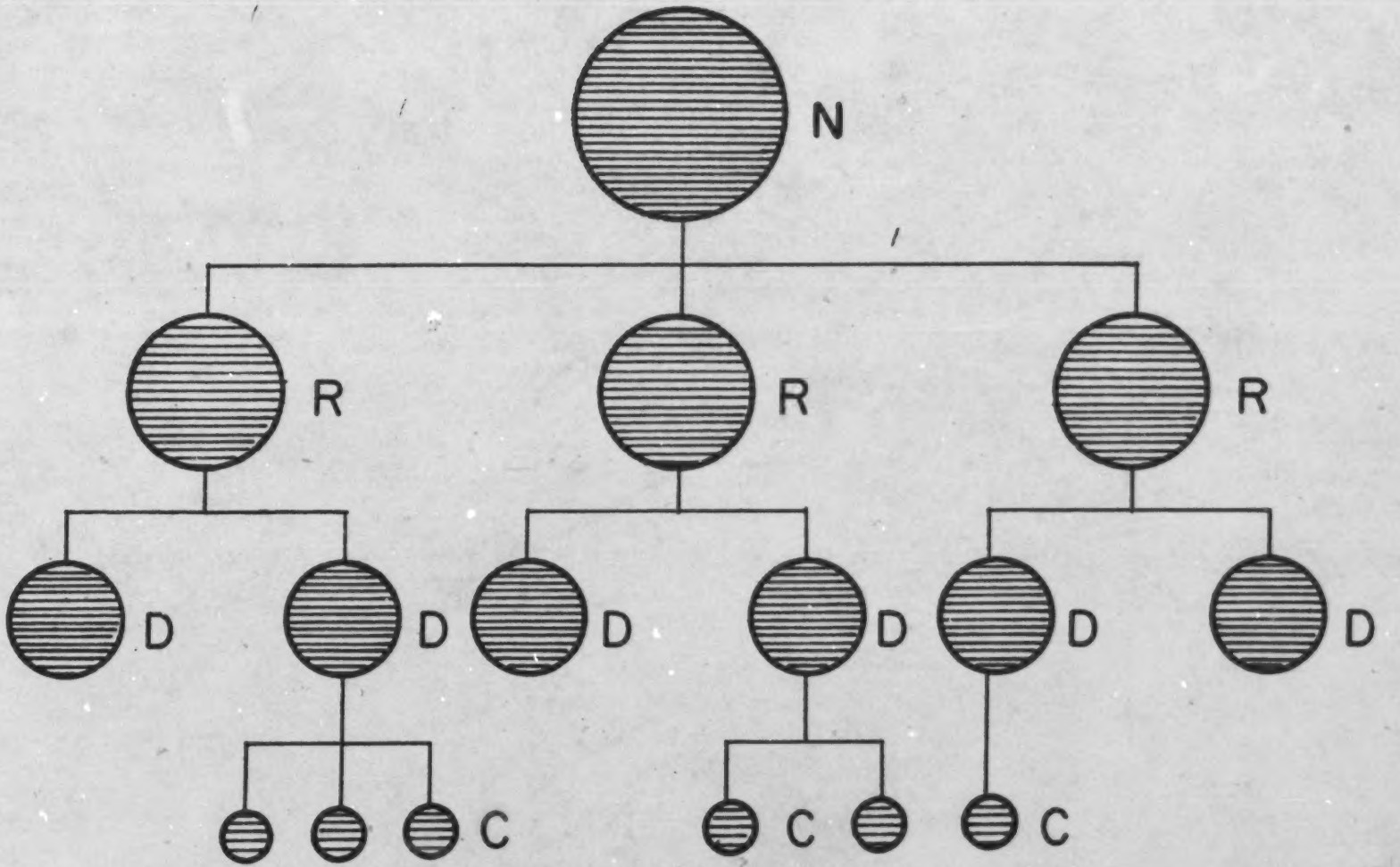

Figure-6. Appropriate learning resources in various institutions at various levels, resulting in a learning resources system for a learning society.

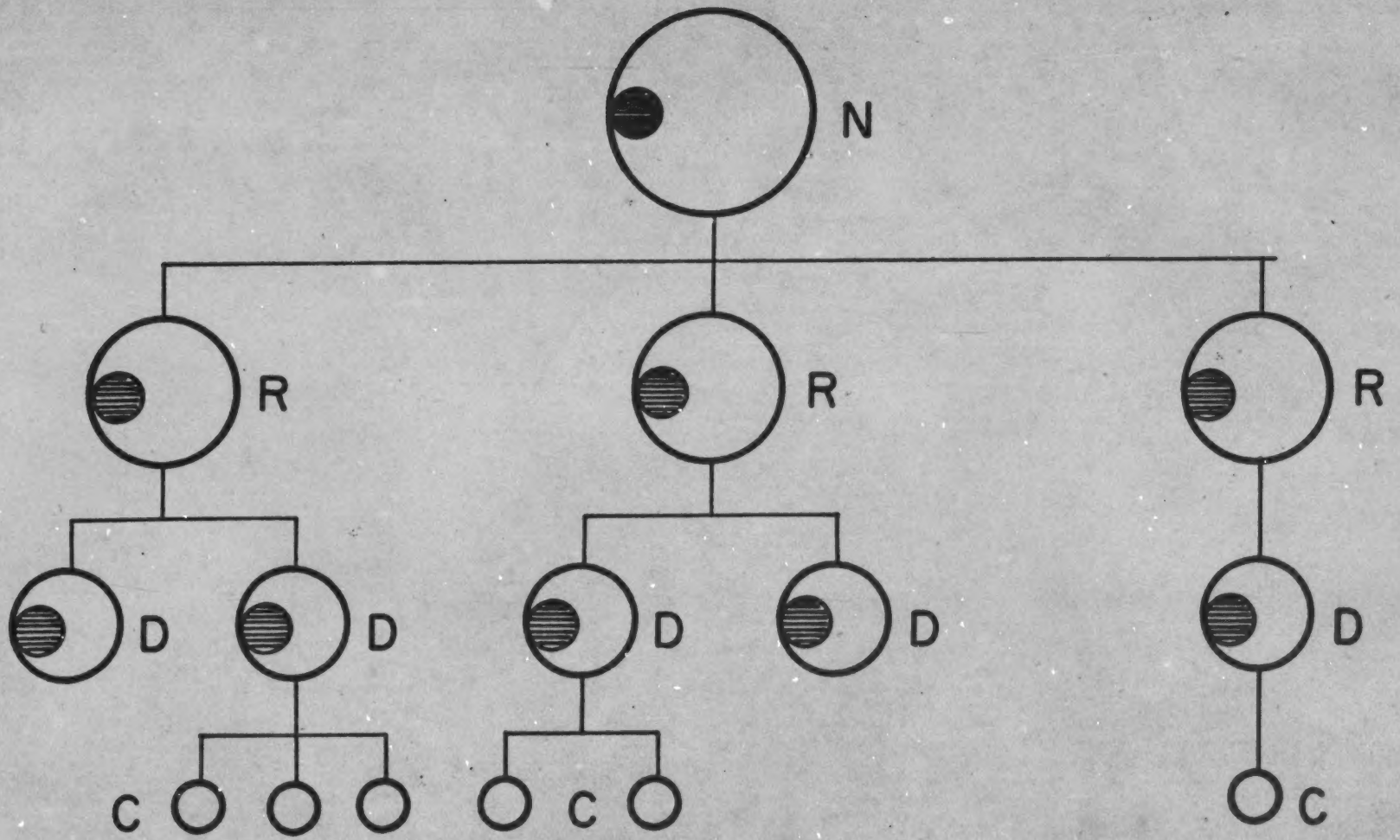

Figure-7. A comprehensive, national system for the delivery of community education for community action, with learning resources components built into the system at various levels.

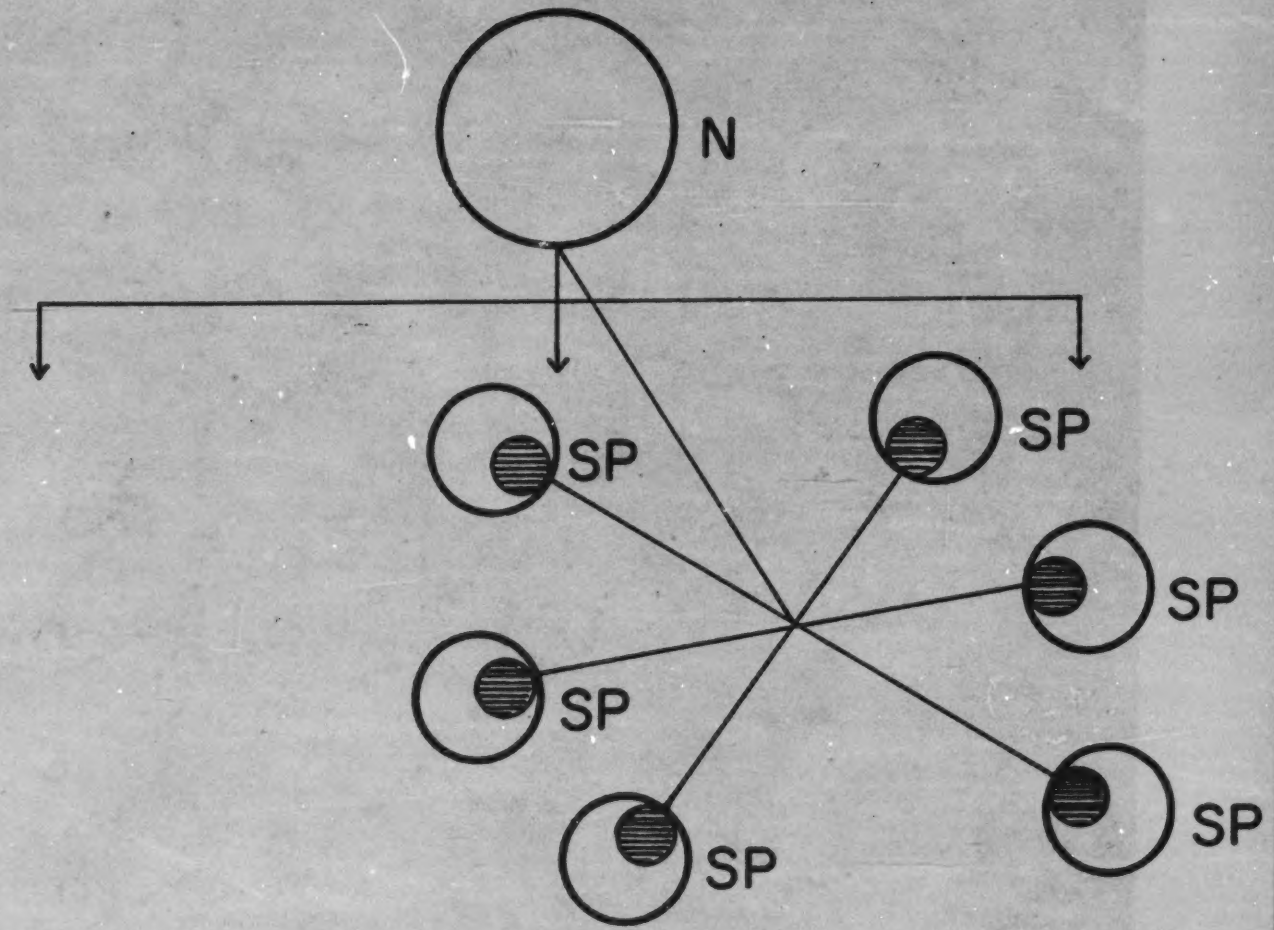

Figure-8. A network of community centers under a special project, each self-contained in terms of learning resources facilities.

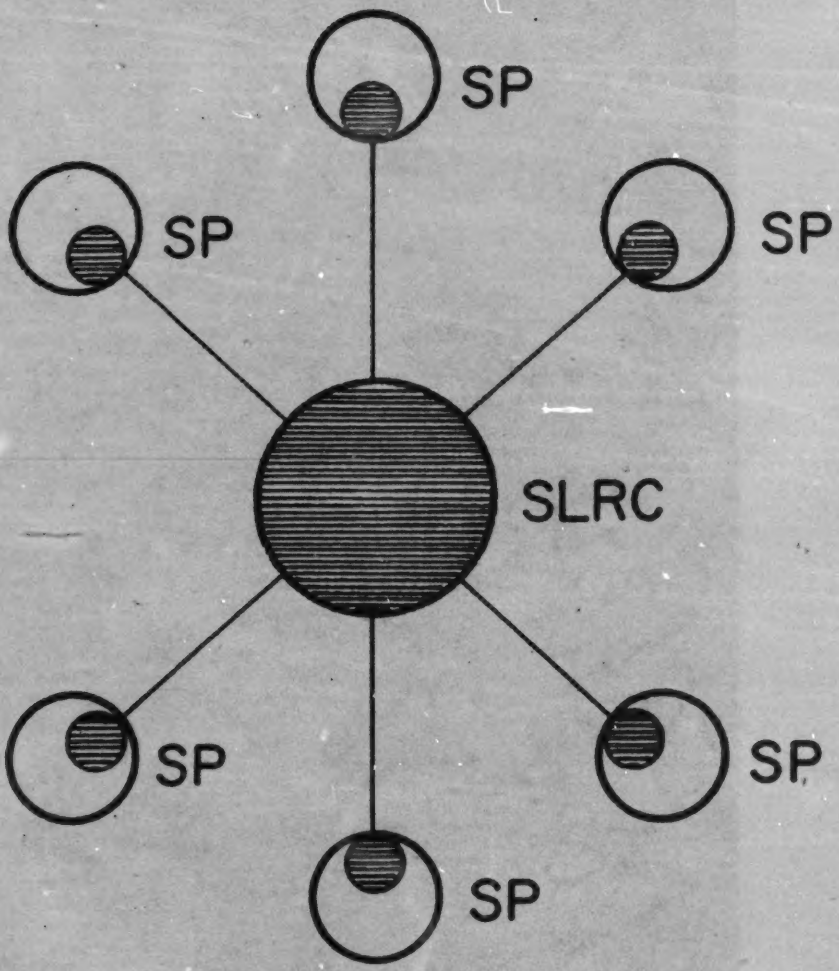

Figure-9. Community centers under a special project being served from a central learning resources center. Such a central learning resources center could at some later time begin to serve clients other than those served by the special project.